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THE FAITHFUL LOVERS.

"Had we never lov'd sœe kindly,
Had we never lov'd sœe blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted."

BURNS.

In the barony of Fermoy, and on the bank of the river Funcheon, lie the ruins of the ancient church of Molaga, celebrated for the crowds of devotees that resort there to testify their respect for the saint, and to invoke his intercession. An ancient tradition of the country also relates that this cemetery contains the remains of two lovers whose matchless constancy and melancholy fate will only be forgotten when the currents of the rapid Funcheon cease to flow.

Mary Fleming was the daughter of a rich farmer that held extensive lands in the fair and fertile tract of Glanworth, or the golden vale, so called from its yellow harvests. He claimed descent from the Flemings, the magnificent remains of whose stately castle crown the bank of the Funcheon at the village of Glanworth, which anciently was a considerable town. Mary Fleming was an only child, and her father, a sordid man, was anxious to procure for her the hand of a wealthy suitor—one whose herds and pastures would equal his own. Many of the neighbouring farmers, no less smitten with Mary's fortune than captivated by her pleasing exterior, and graceful unaffected manners, at the occasional patron or rural dance of the Sunday afternoon, offered her those tender attentions, the meaning of which the most untaught of Eve's daughters are not slow in understanding; but she received their advances with cold civility. Some young men ventured to make formal proposals to Fleming, and though the character and means of these suitors were unexceptionable, yet she unaccountably rejected them. At length a wealthy person from a remote district, came and sued for her hand. The advantages of this proposal were too obvious to be contemned: Fleming accepted him as his future son-in-law, and when he placed in review before his daughter, the good qualities and extensive pastures of her suitor, she declared with that bluntness of simplicity which is characteristic of the female mind, when untainted by the simulating affectations of refinement, that she would not wed the greatest man in the five provinces; for it would be the death of Shemus Oge O'Keefe, who she knew loved her better than his own life.

Some ten months after this, in the twilight of a gloomy November evening, a tall figure, wrapped in a large dark cloak, was seen slowly to wind his course along the Funcheon, towards the well of St. Molaga. It was Shemus Oge O'Keefe, in whose favour Mary Fleming declared herself, as above related. At that time he was a tall commanding figure, where strength and agility finely blended. His family were in decaying circumstances at his birth; but he received a liberal education, for he had been brought up by his uncle, a Roman Catholic ecclesiastic, who, dying when he was young, left Shemus no other inheritance than poverty; and he returned to his widowed mother's cottage, to share her scanty means, and assist in the cultivation of a few fields which remained from the wreck of their ruined fortunes. When her father heard Mary's abrupt declaration in favour of Shemus Oge O'Keefe, he stood aghast with surprise; for though that young man, immediately after his return to his mother's cottage, was fortunate enough to preserve Mary Fleming from drowning, a stranger to the warmth of gratitude himself, he hardly reflected on the extent of the obligation due to Shemus Oge, or thought that his daughter's intimacy with her deliverer exceeded the bounds of mere acquaintance. He procured one whose influence ought to have been directed to better ends, to tamper with the simplicity of the untaught girl; who, by authority and persuasion, so wrought upon her religious feelings, that she was induced to believe, that entertaining a secret passion for any person contrary to the wishes of her father, was in direct opposition to the laws of God; and that to atone in some measure for her crime, and

avoid eternal misery hereafter, she should promise to marry the husband of her father's choice. The weak girl, terrified by the artful representations of one whom she was taught to look up to as the interpreter of every doubt, yielded reluctant consent—promised to abandon Shemus Oge O'Keefe for ever—and the day was already fixed for her marriage with the wealthy stranger to whom we before alluded. During the progress of this baleful proceeding, her unfortunate lover made frequent attempts to see her, but his endeavours were baffled by her father's vigilance. The ruin of his hopes, the rumoured inconstancy of the maid he idolized—the consuming, restless flame that burned within his breast—all preyed with fatal activity upon his constitution. At length he heard that the day had been fixed for Mary Fleming's wedding: he resolved to see her once more—to bid her an eternal adieu—to catch a parting view of one he loved so tenderly—and then return to his bed of death, or to eternal exile from his native land. Let fate do its worst, he was prepared to suffer. For this he sought an interview, and Mary promised to meet him by the twilight hour on this day, at the well of St. Molaga.

When Mary Fleming arrived in the haze of the twilight gloom at the appointed place, she could scarce believe that the emaciated figure which bent before her, was the gay and accomplished youth who delighted her eye a few short months before. The calm despair that sat on his marble brow—the death-like paleness of his cheek—and the faint glare of his glazed and sunken eye, appalled her, and, flinging herself upon the chilly sward, wild and broken bursts of feeling seemed to convulse her very soul. "O, Shemus Oge! is this the reward of your faithful love? Are that sunken cheek and hollow eye Mary Fleming's gifts for rescuing her from certain death, on that day when the waters of the rapid Funcheon were closing over her head? O! had I then died, I should not now be the ruin of your health, and the destruction of my own soul."

"Surely you do not apprehend that to trample on my sacred feelings, and, with more than woman's inconstancy, despise that honourable passion which you yourself have approved and encouraged, can merit the exemplary punishment you mention."

"O, poor bewildered heart!—did not Father Florence, the priest of God, who knows more than a thousand like me—did not he say, that there was an eternity of pain for disobedient children?—that I could not innocently have a liking for any young man, unless with my father's approbation;—that what young people call love, is but a snare of the tempter's to lead souls to perdition. O! he bewildered my brain—every night in my dreams I saw hell open to receive us; and last Sunday I swore to renounce you for ever, and marry Myles Mahony."

"Mary," said he, with a calm and collected tone, "I forgive you; and God forgive them that practised on your simplicity of heart. My feelings are not like those of other men: my love has been as fierce as the lava-fire which burns in the bowels of Etna—it has consumed the marrow of my bones. This is the last time I shall obtrude my accents on your ear—never, never more shall this unfortunate wretch cross the pathway of your future life. Mary, farewell for ever."

The wretched Mary Fleming gave her reluctant hand to Myles Mahony on the next Sunday, and it is said that the unfortunate girl heard the mournful howling of O'Keefe's little dogs* during the marriage ceremony. This denoted that a descendant of the race of O'Keefe was dead; and the report soon prevailed, that Shemus Oge had breathed his last. The bride, in all the settled calmness of despair, with a firm, subdued tone, and tearless eye, requested her husband's permission to weep one half hour over the corpse of Shemus Oge O'Keefe. It was the request of her bridal night; nor did he deny the

* It is said that the approaching death of an O'Keefe is announced by a supernatural melancholy cry, resembling the howling of dogs. A man in Duhallow lately assured me, that he both saw the three little dogs and heard their howling at the time the last representative of the O'Keefe family died.

melancholy boon. She came—and the following is a literal translation of the dirge or cione she uttered over her beloved youth. The original words are sung to a melancholy air by the peasantry of Roche's country.

"O! deep despair! O, dreadful doom, to view thee laid low in death, bedewed by the tears of thy wretched Mary. I little thought when I gave thee the vow, that I should send thee to an untimely grave; but heaven beholds I would yield my life to preserve thine.

"We exchanged in mutual love a token, and never shall I break the holy promise. I will prize for ever the sacred pledge that bound me when thy chaste modest arm circled my waist.

"Ye fair maidens whose pearly tears are falling, whose bosoms are melting with generous compassion, ye are sensible that Shemus Oge had many a charm to win me, and warm into love the heart that breaks in my bosom.

"His was the speed of the wild roe of the mountain, the unrivalled blush of the rose, the mildness of the dove, the retiring modesty of the cowslip. Many a virgin sighed for his love.

"Our favourite thorn has heard the vows we plighted, and though artifice has doomed me the bride of another, I shall be thine, pure and undefiled. Though my father basely sold me for gold, I shall fly to thy embrace—no power of earth can restrain me.

"A hated husband—let other arms embrace him—the virgin's bridal bed shall be the grave of her lover. His blest spirit shall hover on the wing, till his betrothed fly to his eternal society.

"Wait, wait awhile! my soul warm sighs to rejoin thee. Our greetings shall be unalloyed in the realms of peace, and our bridal sleep shall know no waking. 'This song of sorrow shall cease, for Shemus Oge calls his beloved—I go! I go!"

Her song of lamentation was hushed; she laid her bosom on that of her lifeless lover, and heaved one deep sigh—it was her last; for when the mourners that attended the corpse sought to remove her, they found her heart and its sorrows hushed in eternal repose.

Fleming would not permit that the remains of his unfortunate daughter should repose in the same grave with Shemus Oge O'Keefe; they rest in the respective burying-places of their families, which were contiguous; and the next spring beheld two trees planted by unknown hand, unite in midway, and form by their intertwining branches the figure called *a true lover's knot*, emblematic of their changeless fidelity in life and death. E. W.

THE WHITEFOOT.

BY A LADY.

'Twas on a drear and stilly night,
When all had sought repose,
When scarce a gleam of cheering light,
Amid the gloom arose,
Young Edward reach'd our lonely home,
Ere forc'd from all he lov'd to roam—
His father land, companions gay,
With whom life's morn swift pass'd away.

How like his heart was that drear night,
There hope had ceas'd to dwell;
Sweet hope, which misery cannot blight,
O'er him you cast no spell.
He seem'd in this wide world as one
Wretched, forsaken, and alone;
For by his rashness were the few
Devoted to him wretched too.

He once had friends, and kindred dear,
Till civil discord's strife
Robb'd him of all he held most dear,
Even his intended wife.
The idol of his soul was she,
Aye, of his very infancy;—
Oh! mad'ning thought, that from his heart
She's sever'd by a villain's art.

Revenge now fill'd the generous heart,
That love so long had sway'd—
He vow'd ere life's last thro' should part,
To avenge his dear, lov'd maid;

Then sought his base false-hearted friend,
And soon of parleying made an end.
In deadly struggle now they met—
He lays him lifeless at his feet.

A haggard wanderer here he stood,
Of wild and reckless mien;
How different in air and mood
From what he late had been!
His bosom heav'd as if the air
In flowing wave were pent up there;
While from his eye a light was cast,
As if his warm soul beam'd its last.

Awhile he stands in silent maze,
Where oft he stood of yore,
As 'twere to take a farewell gaze
Of scenes he'd view no more;
His burning glance then full he cast
On one whose heart was with'ring fast—
A heart that lov'd him far too well
For peace within it now to dwell.

That glance a pardon once entreat,
For ev'ry painful sigh,
Caused by his hapless wayward fate—
Since tears first dim'd her eye.
Ah, me! how many bitter tears
Have dim'd those eyes for three long years—
Will dim them should the feeling still
Remain, their glassy orbs to fill.

He tho' long school'd in deep distress,
Felt now the poignant grief
That will a gentle spirit press
Where hope gives no relief;
He felt a burning feverish glow
That seem'd through his swollen veins to flow;
Tears like a torrent rapid gushed,
And from his once loved home he rushed.

The broad Atlantic's wave soon bore,
From his dear native land,
Young Edward to a distant shore,
Where midst a patriot band,
Two ling'ring years he nobly fought,
And found at length the grave he sought—
For life a burden had become,
His hopes all pointed to the tomb.

Kilkenny, September.

THE LEGEND OF PUCK THE FAIRY.

BY THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

Would'st thou know what tricks by the pale moonlight
Are played by me, the merry little sprite,
Who wing thro' air, from the camp to the court—
From king to clown, and of all make sport,
Singing, I am the sprite,
Of the merry midnight,

Who laugh at weak mortals, and quaff the moonlight.

To a miser's bed, where he snoring slept,
And dreamt of his cash, I slyly crept;
Chink, chink, on his pillow, like money I rang
And he wak'd to catch, but away I sprang.

I saw through the leaves in a damsel's bower;
She was waiting her love at that star-light hour
"Hist, hist! quoth I, with an amorous sigh,
And she flew to the door, but away flew I.

While a bard sat inditing an ode to his love,
Like a pair of blue meteors I stared from above;
And he swoon'd—for he thought 'twas the ghost, poor man
Of his lady's eyes, while away I ran,
Singing, I am the sprite,
Of the merry midnight,
Who laugh at weak mortals, and quaff the moonlight.

TO OUR READERS.

As we have been informed since the publication of our last Number, that the story of Squire Beanton, which we gave in it, had previously appeared in another periodical in this city, we feel called upon to say, that the author sent the manuscript of the story to us some time ago, with a request that we would publish it; and finding it had merit, but wanted some slight alterations, which we had not then time to make, we allowed it to remain over. The gentleman who forwarded it, has since assured us, that he never sent it to any other person for publication; we therefore presume that the story having been, like many others, often repeated in company, was furnished by another hand, to the miscellany in which it appeared.